

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please replace the pending claims with the following listing of claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) Apparatus for reconstructing a ligament, said apparatus comprising:

 a bone fixation element having a distal end, a proximal end, and a central bore extending between said distal end and said proximal end, said central bore having a first diameter, said bone fixation element having an exterior surface with a thread outwardly projecting therefrom and said bone fixation element being adapted for positioning in a bone tunnel;

 a flexible filament having a distal end and a proximal end, said distal end having retaining means for holding a graft ligament, and said flexible filament having a second diameter smaller than said first diameter so as to allow said flexible filament to slidably pass through said central bore of said bone fixation element, whereby said flexible filament holding the graft ligament in the bone tunnel is slideably positionable through said central bore of said bone fixation element; and

 a crimp crimped onto said flexible filament such that said crimp is securely fixed to said flexible filament independent of engagement between said crimp and said bone fixation element, whereby said crimp is fixedly positionable to said flexible filament adjacent to said proximal end of said bone fixation element so as to prevent distal movement of said flexible filament relative to said bone fixation element and hence prevent distal movement of said graft ligament in the bone tunnel.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently amended) A method for reconstructing a ligament, said method comprises:

providing apparatus for reconstructing a ligament, said apparatus comprising:
a bone fixation element having a distal end, [[and]] a proximal end, and a central bore extending between said distal end and said proximal end, said central bore having a first diameter, said bone fixation element comprising an exterior surface with a thread outwardly projecting therefrom and said bone fixation element being adapted for positioning in a bone tunnel;

a flexible filament having a distal end and a proximal end, said distal end having retaining means for holding a graft ligament, and said flexible filament having a second diameter smaller than said first diameter so as to allow said flexible filament to slidably pass through said central bore of said bone fixation element, whereby said flexible filament holding the graft ligament in the bone tunnel is slideably positionable through said central bore of said bone fixation element; and

a crimp configured for attachment to said flexible filament, said crimp having at least one given cross-sectional width, said at least one given cross-sectional width being greater than said first diameter, whereby said crimp is fixedly positionable to said flexible filament adjacent to said proximal end of said bone fixation element so as to prevent distal movement of said flexible filament

relative to said bone fixation element and hence prevent distal movement of said graft ligament in the bone tunnel;
positioning said flexible filament through said central bore of said bone fixation element, and positioning said bone fixation element in a first bone tunnel portion, and positioning said graft ligament in a second bone tunnel portion by drawing said flexible filament through said bone fixation element; and
attaching said crimp onto said flexible filament adjacent to said proximal end of said bone fixation element such that said crimp is securely fixed to said flexible filament independent of the engagement between said crimp and said bone fixation element, said crimp being attached to the flexible filament after said graft ligament is positioned within said second bone tunnel selectively biased against a portion of said flexible filament relative to said bone fixation element.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 2, wherein said flexible filament comprises a braided cable.

7. (Currently amended) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 2, further wherein the means for holding a graft ligament comprises a loop formed on the flexible filament.

8. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 2, further comprising a drill guide.

9. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 8, wherein the drill guide includes an endosteal guide.

10. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 4, further comprising attaching a graft ligament to said retaining means for holding a graft ligament.

11. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 10, further comprising tensioning said flexible filament such that said crimp is biased against said bone fixation element so as to secure said graft ligament inside said bone tunnel.

12. (Currently amended) Apparatus for reconstructing a ligament, said apparatus comprising:

a cannulated screw having an interior surface and an exterior surface, the interior surface bounding a bore extending through the cannulated screw, a thread outwardly projecting from the exterior surface of the cannulated screw;

a flexible filament extending through at least a portion of the bore of the cannulated screw; and

a crimp crimped onto the flexible filament such that the crimp is securely fixed to the flexible filament independent of engagement between the crimp and the cannulated

screw, the crimp being configured so as to prevent passage of said crimp through said bore of said cannulated screw selectively biased against the cannulated screw so as to fix a portion of the flexible filament relative to the cannulated screw.

13. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 12, further comprising a drill guide having a proximal end and a distal end.

14. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 13, wherein the distal end of the drill guide includes an endosteal guide.

15. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 14, wherein the endosteal guide comprises means for retaining a flexible filament such that the endosteal guide may grab at least a portion of the flexible filament.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously presented) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 12, wherein the flexible filament comprises means for retaining a graft ligament.

19. (Currently amended) A method for reconstructing a ligament comprising the steps of:

forming a tunnel within a bone;

securing a bone fixation element within the tunnel, a flexible filament extending through a bore formed on the bone fixation element so that at least a portion of the flexible filament is disposed within at least a portion of the tunnel, the bone fixation element having an outwardly projecting thread that engages the bone;

securing a crimp onto the flexible filament at a location spaced apart from the bone fixation element such that the crimp is securely fixed to the flexible filament, said crimp being secured onto the flexible filament after the at least a portion of the flexible filament is disposed within the at least a portion of the tunnel; and

tensioning the flexible filament such that the crimp is biased against the bone fixation element.

20. (Currently amended) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 19, wherein the step of drilling the forming a tunnel comprises drilling a first bone tunnel through at least a portion of a tibia and at least a portion of a femur, a distal end of the first bone tunnel forming an opening on the tibia.

21. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 20, further comprising the step of inserting an endosteal guide through the distal end of the first bone tunnel.

22. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 21, wherein the endosteal guide comprises means for gripping the flexible filament.

23. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 20, further comprising drilling a second bone tunnel through a portion of the femur so as to intersect with the first bone tunnel.

24. (Currently amended) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 23, wherein the second bone tunnel intersecting intersects with the first bone tunnel at an angle.

25. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 24, wherein the angle is in a range of about 30 ° to about 60 °.

26. (Currently amended) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 23, wherein the step of securing the bone fixation element comprising comprises securing the bone fixation element within the second bone tunnel.

27. (Currently amended) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 19, wherein the step of securing a bone fixation element within the tunnel comprises screwing the bone fixation element into the tunnel, ~~the bone fixation element having an outwardly projecting thread that engages the bone.~~

28. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 19, wherein the step of securing the bone fixation element within the tunnel comprises:

advancing the flexible filament through the tunnel; and
passing the bone fixation element over the flexible filament.

29. (Previously presented) A method for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 19, further comprising securing a ligament to the flexible filament.

30. (New) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 2, wherein the thread comprises a helical thread encircling the bone fixation element.

31. (New) An apparatus for reconstructing a ligament as in claim 12, wherein the thread comprises a helical thread encircling the cannulated screw.